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Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
---------- 071182
P 291202Z MAY 74
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6080
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

S E C R E T GENEVA 3361

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SNAR, TU, UN
SUBJ: TURKISH OPIUM BAN-INCB VISIT

REF: GENEVA 3137

1. SUMMARY: DURING CONSULTATIONS ANKARA MAY 20-23 INCB MISSION ARGUED AGAINST LIFTING OF TURKISH OPIUM BAN. TURKISH SIDE ADVISED THAT QUESTION OF BAN STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION GOT AND NO DECISION MADE AS YET LIFT BAN. END SUMMARY

2. DITTERT HAS FURNISHED FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON GREENFIELD/HIS CONSULTATIONS ANKARA MAY 20-23. NOTED THAT GOT HAD REITERATED WISH THAT CONSUTATIONS REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL AND ASKED THAT INFO HE PROVIDING BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND WITHIN LIMITED USG CIRCLES.

3. GREENFIELD/DITTERT SAW MFA SECGEN EREZ, HEAD OF IO DEPT SOYLEMEZ AND OTHER LOWER-RANKING MFA OFFICIALS. THEY UNABLE SEE ECEVIT WHO REPORTEDLY INVOLVED IN CONTINUOUS DISCUSSIONS WITH OFFICIALS HIS PARTY AND NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY IN EFFORT SHORE-UP COALITION. GUNES MADE TWO APPOINTMENTS MEET WITH THEM BUT CANCELLED BOTH AT LAST MINUTE ON GROUND HE TOTALLY OCCUPIED WITH ECEVIT AND WITH DEBATE IN PARLIAMENT ON MFA BUDGET. DITTERT MENTIONED THAT GREENFIELD/HE SAW INCB MEMBER KAYMAKCLAN SOCIALLY, NOTING THAT KAYMAKCALAN IS UNDER ATTACK BY PRESS AND SOME STUDENTS FOR HAVING FAVORED BAN AND
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FOR BEING "PRO-AMERICAN". DITTERT ALSO MENTIONED THAT SOYLEMEZ

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HAD EXPRESSED ASSUMPTION THAT USG AWARE OF INCB VISIT, ADDING
THAT GREENFIELD/ HE IGNORED THIS STATEMENT.

4. DITTERT CHARACTERIZED DISCUSSION AS "VERY FRANK", WITH GOT
SPOKESMEN AT TIMES "TENSE AND AGGRESSIVE". TURKISH SIDE MADE
FAMILIAR PRESENTATION RE DIFFICULTIES CREATED BY BAN, BUT
"INSISTED VERY MUCH" THAT NO DECISION TAKEN AS YET LIFT BAN.
TURKS REFERRED SEVERAL TIMES TO PRESS REPORTS THAT U.S. ITSELF
INTENDS GROW OPIUM FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION, WITH SOYLEMEZ
NOTING THIS CONNECTION THAT HE HAS LEARNED OVER THE YEARS TO
RELY HEAVILY ON ACCURACY OF NEW YORK TIMES. GREENFIELD CAUTIONED
AGAINST RELIANCE ON NEWSPAPERS AND STRESSED THAT USG HAS FIRMLY
AND OFFICIALLY DENIED REPORTS IN QUESTION. HOWEVER, TURKS LEFT
IMPRESSION THEY DO NOT BELIEVE USG DENIAL.

5. IN HIS PRESENTATION AND IN RESPONSE OTHER POINTS MADE BY
TURKS, GREENFIELD MADE COMMENTS TO FOLLOWING EFFECT:
A. GOT ADMITTEDLY HAS SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO LIFT BAN BUT MUST
CONSIDER ALL ASPECTS OF SITUATION AND TAKE INTO ACCOUNT WHAT
BOARD FORESEES HAPPENING IN SUCH EVENTUALITY. MAIN POINT IS
THAT BAN HAS HAD TREMENDOUS IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL LIILICT
TRAFFIC AND ONLY MINIMAL EFFECT ON LICIT SITUATION BECAUSE
TURKISH LICIT PRODUCTION HAS NEVER BEEN LARGE.
B. TURKISH OPIUM NOT NEEDED FOR MEDICAL NEEDS. PARTIAL FAILURE
OF INDIA'S 1973 POPPY CROP HAS CREATED ONLY TEMPORARY DIFFICULTIES
WHICH HAVE BEEN EXAGGERATED BY MANUFACTURES WHOSE PROJECTIONS
DISINTERESTED STATISTICIANS COULD NOT ACCEPT. FUTURE CODEINE
DEMAND CAN BE MET BY INDIA THROUGH MORE INTENSIVE CULTIVATION AND
USE HIGH-YIELDING SEED.
C. IN PAST TURKEY HAS PROVEN ITSELF INCAPABLE OF CONTROLLING
PRODUCTION AND WOULD BE UNLIKELY BE ABLE DEVELOP EFFECTIVE
CONTROL SYSTEM. SUCH EFFORT WOULD IN ANY CASE BE COSTLY AND
UNECONOMIC FOR COMMODITY WHICH WOULD BE OF MODEST PROPORTIONS
AND HAVE DIMINISHING LICIT MARKET FOLLOWING INEVITABLE DEVELOP-
MENT OF ADEQUATE SYNTHETICS FOR OPIATES. COST COULD NOT BE OFFSET
BY RESORT TO AUTHORIZED DOMESTIC MANUFACTURE OF OPIATES FOR WHICH
THERE LIKELY BE ONLY LOCAL DEMAND. EVEN IF WATER-TIGHT CONTROL
SYSTEM COULD BE DEVISED, FARMERS WOULD BE OUTRAGED TO FIND THEY
CAN SELL OPIUM FOR NO MORE THAN LICIT PRICES WHICH WOULD BE
FAR BELOW WHAT THEY FORMERLY OBTAINED IN ILLICIT MARKET.
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D. ACHIEVING FULLY EFFECTIVE CONTROL IS SO DIFFICULT THAT FORMER
OPIUM PRODUCERS SUCH AS YUGOSLAVIA HAVE GIVEN UP PRODUCTION. USSR
HAS TOLD INCB THAT IT HAS DECIDED DO LIKEWISE AND TO RELY ON
SYNTHETICS IN LIEU OF OPIATES. EVEN INDIA WITH ITS LONG-ESTABLISHED
CONTROL APPARATUS IS UNWILLING EXTEND POPPY CULTIVATION AREA
BECAUSE THIS WOULD IMPAIR ITS SECURITY SYSTEM.
E. APPREHENSION WOULD BE FELT IN THESE/OTHER COUNTRIES IF BAN
LIFTED AND THIS CONCERN WOULD NOT BE DIMINISHED IF PRODUCTION

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CONFINED TO POPPY STRAW. CONCERN WOULD BE SHARED BY INCB WHICH HAS BEFORE IT STATISTICS OF TURKEY'S PREVIOUS STRAW EXPORTS INDICATING OPIUM PRODUCTION TO BE FAR IN EXCESS OF QUANTITIES DELIVERED TO OPIUM MONOPOLY.

F. OPIUM COULD IN ANY EVENT PROVIDE ONLY SMALL MEASURE OF HELP FOR FARMERS. BEST COURSE WOULD BE FOR TURKEY MAINTAIN BAN AND DEVELOP RURAL ECONOMY ON AMBITIOUS SCALE, FOR WHICH HELP OF FRIENDLY GOVTS WOULD BE NEEDED. BUT IF BAN LIFTED, WIDESPREAD GOO-WILL BUILT UP FOR TURKEY FOLLOWING BAN'S IMPOSITION WOULD DISAPPEAR AND FRIENDLY GOVTS WOULD BE ALIENATED.

G. IF BAN LIFTED ILLICIT TRAFFICKERS WOULD AS ELSEWHERE CONVERT OPIUM INTO LESS EASILY DETECTABLE FORMS OF MORPHINE/HEROIN PRIOR EXPORT. EXPERIENCE OTHER COUNTRIES SHOWS THAT PRESENCE THESE SUBSTANCES WITHIN TURKEY WOULD POSE GRAVE DANGER TO TURKISH YOUTH. DEVELOPMENT OF ADDICTION WOULD BE HIGH PRICE FOR TURKEY TO PAY FOR CHANGE OF POLICY DESIGNED ALLEVIATE PRESENT RURAL DISCONTENT.

H. IN WAKE OF RESCINDING OF BAN OTHER COUNTRIES, SUCH AS AFGHA-ISTAN AND PAKISTAN WOULD BE LIKELY ALSO ATTEMPT ENTER LICIT EXPORT COMPETITION. IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL CONTROL SYSTEM WOULD BE DISASTROUS AND TURKEY WOULD BEAR HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY FOR UNRAVELLING OF SYSTEM. DALE

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